

## **FAA Background Information Regarding U.S. Civil Aviation – Egypt Sinai Peninsula in the Cairo (HECC) Flight Information Region (FIR)**

Due to the ongoing fighting involving military forces, extremist/militant elements, and the unstable security situation in the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula, the FAA assesses there is a risk to U.S. civil aviation operating into, out of, within, or over the Sinai Peninsula in the Cairo (HECC) Flight Information Region (FIR), within the lateral limits described in NOTAM A0008/17, at altitudes below FL260.

International civil air routes that transit the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula and aircraft operating to and from Sinai airports are at risk from extremist/militant attacks involving small arms, indirect-fire weapons, and anti-aircraft capable weapons, including man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS). Some MANPADS could target aircraft up to a maximum altitude of 25,000 feet. These weapons could also be used to attack airports and aircraft on the ground.

The Islamic State in Iraq and ash-Sham in the Sinai (ISIS-Sinai), an Egypt-based affiliate of ISIS, continues to conduct attacks in northern and southern Sinai, some of which demonstrate their capability and intent to target civil aviation. In February 2017, ISIS-Sinai focused indirect fire on Eilat, Israel using rockets fired from southern Sinai. In October 2015, ISIS-Sinai claimed responsibility for the improvised explosive device (IED) bomb attack that destroyed a Russian passenger airliner enroute from Sharm el-Sheikh (HESH), Egypt to St. Petersburg, Russia. The group claimed an IED was placed aboard the aircraft prior to its departure from Sharm el-Sheikh, raising concerns about potential insider threats at the airport. In June 2015, ISIS-Sinai fired rockets towards an airport located in northern Sinai, and in January 2014, ISIS-Sinai fired small arms at an Egyptian military aircraft in the region and used MANPADS to shoot down an Egyptian military helicopter flying at low altitude. Although MANPADS have not been used to target civil aircraft in the Sinai, extremists/militants could do so at any time with little or no warning.

The FAA will continue to monitor risks to U.S. civil aviation operations in the Cairo (HECC) FIR and will adjust its advisory for U.S. civil aviation operations as warranted.

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